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OF THIS AND THAT CIA DIARY

EVERYONE is talking about a mysterious book these days. Nobody has seen it, but everybody seems to know what it contains. Secret lists of the contents are being passed on from one end of the town to another. Frankly, I am rather upset about the whole thing. It makes me uneasy, partly because I have heard my own name being mentioned at one or two places. But first about the book.

It is supposed to be called "Who's Who in CIA," printed and published in East Germany or some place. The German edition is said to have come out in June and in view of growing international demand, an English language version is believed to have been released in September last. They say it is already all over Europe; though travellers returning from Europe say they haven't seen it anywhere. It is said that it contains the names and particulars of CIA people working in 120 countries of the world. There are supposed to be more than a hundred of them in Pakistan alone. This is the funny bit.

A couple of weeks ago, as I was taking my favourite late

evening walk on the Mall, I was stopped by a friend. "What do you know?" he asked. "Nothing," I replied matter-of-factly. "Do you know Bobbie Sheikh?" he asked. "What does he do?" I inquired because I just couldn't remember anyone called Bobbie Sheikh, or Bobbie for that matter. "Bobbie is the fellow who used to be in the coffee house every morning at opening time. You know the one who used to borrow books from the British Council and carry them under his arm the whole day?" my friend said. Well, I did seem to recall a bird of this description, especially since he owed me 20 rupees and my copy of the celebrated classic "To Confess I'm not Ashamed". "What about him?" I asked.

"He was working for the CIA," he said. "Who said so?" I asked. "It is in the book," he answered. "Really!" I said. "Really!" he replied, "and there are many more." Then he proceeded to give me a list of names that made my hair stand on end. "Come, come," I finally said, "I swear," he replied quite indignantly, "it is all in the book. A very reliable source who has seen the book with his own eyes told me." "Is my name also there?" I asked. You never know what may come of passing in front of the U.S. Consulate-General twice a week, which I do normally. "I

Continued on page 9

CIA DIARY

Continued from Page 8.

am not sure," he replied.

The next day someone rang me at the office. "You never told us," he began. "Told you what?" I asked. "That you were working for them," he said. "Working for whom?" I asked. "The CIA," he answered. "Who told you I was working for CIA?" I asked. "Your name is in the book," he said. Then he went on to inform me that he was in possession of a list of all the people who were working for CIA in Pakistan. He was reluctant to tell who had given it to him. An hour later I was informed by another person that my name figured prominently in the list. "Have you seen the book yourself, personally," I asked. "Yes, indeed I have," he assured me. That was when I decided to get in touch with the Americans.

Actually, I wanted to call the Ambassador but he wasn't available. I was put through to one of the secretaries. "Good morning," I said. "Good morning," he replied good-naturedly. "I am sorry I have to be a little curt about it," I said, "but what do you mean by putting me on your pay-roll without either informing me or paying me a cent? One does not do this kind of work for love." "I am sorry but I do not understand," he replied. "Of course, you do not understand," I said angrily. "You book me on the CIA and pass on my name to Washington and then you have the temerity to pass it on to the East Germans so that they can put it in a book and when I want to know what the heck is going on you say that you do not understand. What is the meaning of this? I want an explanation and no diplomatic mumbo-jumbo please," I told him.

"What is your name again?" he asked. I told him. "I am sorry," he said, "but I am sure there is a mistake." "Have you a copy of 'Who's Who in CIA'?" I asked. "No," he answered. "You think I believe that," I snarled. "You think you can fool me with this innocent I am going to take no more. You better play it straight with me. I ask you again. What

on earth do you mean by enlisting me in the CIA without my knowledge and without paying me and then making the information public?" Suddenly, the line went dead. I heard someone say, "This telephone is bugged buddy. Who do you think you are talking to?" "Who are you?" I shouted. "Forget it," the voice said. Well, I am trying to forget it, you see, we CIA people have great equanimity of mind.

—KHALID HASAN

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Next 1 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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